

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Colson Caster Corporation

#### Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions

#### Colson Caster Corporation Develops Its Vision With A Holistic Management Strategy

**Client Profile:**

Colson Caster Corporation is a manufacturer of commercial, industrial, and institutional casters. The company currently employs 225 people at its Jonesboro, Arkansas facility.

**Situation:**

Colson Caster Corporation (Colson) learned about lean manufacturing concepts from the Arkansas Manufacturing Extension Network (the Network), a NIST MEP network affiliate. Colson decided to work with the Network to bring lean solutions to several strategic planning problems at the company.

**Solution:**

The Network met with the Colson team and facilitated strategies and solutions necessary to address key issues. Colson received a 360vu enterprise assessment that confirmed the company's need for strategic planning. In January 2003, the company participated in a six-day 360vu strategic planning process facilitated by the Network. Colson's plant manager began attending American Society for Quality (ASQ) Six Sigma Black Belt Training as part of the company's tactical implementation of its new strategic plan. The company also made plans to address key strategic visions by beginning comprehensive lean implementation projects in workplace organization (5S), total productive maintenance (TPM), and set-up reduction in February 2003.

**Results:**

Analyzed company priorities to develop a strategic vision.

Developed a strategic plan.

Began implementing action plans to achieve goals outlined in strategic plan.

**Testimonial:**

"The Arkansas Manufacturing Extension Network has helped our team to understand and utilize the tools of lean manufacturing, Six Sigma, and other world-class programs in an effort to achieve the cost reductions that are necessary for us to compete in today's global market."

Terry Akin, Plant Manager